

Gold, Cara

From: KaedingL@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2011 7:43 AM
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Cc: kaedingl@aol.com; Gold, Cara; Everts, Todd
Subject: Comments on SB 233

Chairman Klock and members of the House FRET Committee,

I am writing to you concerning SB 233, which you will be considering today. I testified against this bill when it was heard in the Senate Committee on Natural Resources on February 2. Unfortunately, I am unable to get to Helena today, thus, I am sending you this note and asking you to vote "NO" on this bill.

Bill proponents say that the Montana Environmental Policy Act costs jobs and stops resource development in Montana. This is simply untrue. There have been very few lawsuits brought as a result of a MEPA document -- actually there are only 3 cases in the last 5 years -- and those were brought by project neighbors (private property homeowners' associations in both cases) and by a tribal government concerned about their water quality.

In reality, MEPA is designed and used by agencies to make better decisions, more open decisions, and decisions that allow participation of Montana citizens who want to be involved in their government's decisions. Without the MEPA process, agencies will not be required to consider project impacts on cultural resources, private property, public health and safety, and fish and wildlife -- there is no other permitting process where these resources and concerns are examined.

MEPA is about government making better decisions in an open and transparent manner. This is what Montana citizens want. Please vote "NO" on SB 233.

Sincerely

Beth Kaeding
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